

U.S. Marine Corps

Legal Assistance Program

What is the Legal Assistance Program?

Marine Corps attorneys (judge advocates) provide personal legal services to Marines, retirees, other service members, and their families, through the Marine Corps legal assistance program. The program is offered by the installation Staff Judge Advocate to the extent that resources allow and provides comprehensive legal support to our global military community. The focus of the legal assistance program is to assist those eligible for legal assistance with their personal legal affairs in a timely and professional manner by providing clients legal counsel, support, and representation to the maximum extent possible. Worldwide and deployable legal assistance is now regarded as a significant benefit of military service and a major quality of life program that enhances duty performance and retention of personnel. The Commandant of the Marine Corps (Code JAL) is responsible to supervise and manage the Marine Corps Legal Assistance Program, and establish policies relating to the program.

Where can I find Legal Assistance services?

Legal Assistance services are provided at each of the approximately 20 Marine Corps Installations throughout the world. Additionally, eligible personnel can seek assistance at the Legal Assistance offices of other Department of Defense installations. For contact information for all installations, see the website listed below.

Who is eligible for services?

Federal law and DoD regulations limit the persons who are eligible for services. Free legal services are available to the following persons (subject to available resources and ethical considerations):

- Active duty service members of all the Armed Forces and the Coast Guard
- Retirees of all the Armed Forces and the Coast Guard
- Officers of the commissioned corps of the Public Health Service on active duty or entitled to retired to equivalent pay
- Dependents of service members and retirees as described above
- Reservists who have been mobilized for more than 30 days, for a period of time not less than twice the length of the number of days served on active duty while mobilized

What are the services of the program?

In most cases, the scope of representation is limited to that which may be provided in the Legal Assistance Office. However, in exceptional cases, in-court representation may be provided. Legal Assistance Services are provided free of charge. Eligible patrons can seek assistance in a variety of areas:

- Military Rights and Entitlements
- Estate Planning (to include wills)
- Domestic relations and Family Law
- Income Tax Assistance
- Economic and Consumer Affairs
- Preventive Law
- Immigration and Naturalization Services
- Notary Services

For additional information about United States Marine Corps Legal Assistance:

Contact your local installation Legal Assistance Program or visit the HQMC website at <http://sja.hqmc.usmc.mil/jal/JAL.htm>